

15 October 2012

2012 Ibrahim Index of African Governance: Gabon ranks 1st out of 7 in Central Africa

2012 IIAG reveals overall positive trends in governance on the continent, unfavourable shifts in some of Africa's regional powerhouses and a mixed performance across the regions

The sixth Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG), released today, reveals that Gabon came 1st out of 7 countries in Central Africa, and 22nd out of 52 overall.

The 2012 IIAG provides full details of Gabon's performance across four categories of governance: *Safety & Rule of Law*, *Participation & Human Rights*, *Sustainable Economic Opportunity* and *Human Development*.

Gabon's performance in the 2012 IIAG:

- Gabon scores 54 (out of 100) for overall governance.
- Gabon scores higher than the regional average for Central Africa which is 40.
- Gabon scores higher than the continental average which is 51.
- Gabon receives its highest score in the *Human Development* category (65) and its lowest score in the *Sustainable Economic Opportunity* category (44).
- At sub-category level Gabon's highest rank is in *Personal Safety* (7th) and lowest is in *Rural Sector* (44th).
- Between 2000 and 2011 Gabon's overall governance score improved.

Gabon's category and sub-category scores:

Rank (of 52)	Category / Sub-Category	Score (100 = highest)	African Average Score (100 = highest)
22nd	Overall	54	51
19th	Safety & Rule of Law	58	53
20th	Rule of Law	54	48
38th	Accountability	32	43
7th	Personal Safety	60	44
20th	National Security	85	78
25th	Participation & Human Rights	49	48
27th	Participation	46	45
19th	Rights	51	44
32nd	Gender	49	54
32nd	Sustainable Economic Opportunity	44	47
16th	Public Management	59	55
33rd	Business Environment	46	50
26th	Infrastructure	31	32
44th	Rural Sector	38	54
15th	Human Development	65	57
18th	Welfare	57	51
10th	Education	75	54
31st	Health	62	66

Central Africa's performance in the 2012 IIAG:

- Central Africa is ranked 5th out of five African regions for overall governance, 5th out of five regions in all four categories, and in 11 out of 14 sub-categories of the IIAG.



- Central Africa scores below the continental average for overall governance and in each category and sub-category.
- All Central African countries, apart from Gabon, are ranked in the bottom half of the IAG for overall governance

Overall results

The 2012 IAG shows that governance in Africa has improved since 2000. In the last 12 years, at the continental level, there have been improvements in 11 out of the 14 sub-categories of the IAG. The largest improvements are shown in the sub-categories of *Health*, *Rural Sector*, and *Gender*, with all indicators showing improvements since 2000. At indicator level, of the 88 indicators included in the IAG, the largest improvements appear in *Cross-Border Tensions*, *Core International Human Rights Conventions*, *Legislation on Violence against Women*, *Ratio of External Debt Service to Exports*, *Digital Connectivity* and *Anti-Retroviral Treatment Provision*.

Unfavourable shifts in in Africa's regional powerhouses

However, while governance continues to improve in many countries, some of Africa's regional powerhouses – Egypt, Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa – have shown unfavourable governance performance since 2006. Over the past six years, all four countries have declined in two of the four main IAG categories – *Safety & Rule of Law* and *Participation & Human Rights*. Each of these four countries deteriorated the most in the *Participation* sub-category, which assesses the extent to which citizens have the freedom to participate in the political process. South Africa and Kenya have also registered declines in *Sustainable Economic Opportunity*. And Nigeria, West Africa's powerhouse, has for the first time this year fallen into the bottom ten governance performers on the continent.

Abdoulie Janneh, former Executive Secretary of the UN Economic Commission for Africa and Board Member of the Mo Ibrahim Foundation said: "Given the vast natural and human resources of these four regional powers, these governance results are a concern. Each of these countries plays a key role in the economic and political landscape of the continent. To continue to optimally play this role requires a sustained commitment to balanced and equitable governance."

Mixed regional trends

While West, Central and Southern Africa are slowly improving their overall governance scores, both North Africa and East Africa have registered declines. East Africa has now been overtaken by West Africa in the category of *Sustainable Economic Opportunity*. Two of the anchor countries of East Africa – Kenya and Uganda – have demonstrated deteriorations in *Sustainable Economic Opportunity*, dragging down the regional trends.

The importance of 'balance'

Overall, since 2006, the strongest continental performances are registered in the categories of *Sustainable Economic Opportunity* and *Human Development*, where there have been improvements in all sub-categories. Meanwhile, the categories of *Safety & Rule of Law* and *Participation & Human Rights* have registered declines, mainly due to regressions in three sub-categories: *Rule of Law*, *Personal Safety* and *Rights*.

This imbalance of governance performance between the four main categories of the IAG was highlighted in the previous two editions of the IAG, when Egypt, Libya and Tunisia stood out as cases in point. This characteristic, which appears across the continent, remains a concern.



Over the last six years, almost half (21) of the 52 African countries register increased imbalance between the four categories. The 2012 IAG shows that five of the six most imbalanced countries belong to North Africa: Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia. Not only does North Africa remain the most imbalanced region in Africa, it has also experienced the greatest regional governance deterioration since 2006. Contrary to the other four regions, North Africa is the only one that has deteriorated in the sub-categories of *National Security*, *Public Management* and *Infrastructure*.

Mo Ibrahim, Chair of the Mo Ibrahim Foundation said: “It is encouraging to note that the Millennium Development Goals have contributed to the improvement of all 52 countries in the *Human Development* category since 2000. But the post-MDG framework now has the potential to make similar improvements across the full package of goods and services that all citizens have the right to expect, and that governments have the responsibility to deliver.”

General improvements in gender, but West Africa lags behind

In all regions, the highest sub-category score in the *Participation & Human Rights* category was achieved in *Gender*. The notable exception is West Africa, which receives its lowest sub-category score in *Gender*. West Africa is underperforming in this core governance dimension in comparison to other *Participation & Human Rights* sub-categories.

Mary Robinson, former President of Ireland and Board Member of the Mo Ibrahim Foundation said: “Gender equality is a fundamental governance issue, as captured by the IAG. It is not only a question of human rights. Africa’s women have the capacity to bring about remarkable change and therefore equity and equality between men and women is in the strategic interests of African leaders and governments.”

Success stories...and some failures

Over the last six years, Tanzania has climbed up the IAG’s rankings, making it into the top ten for the first time. Angola, Liberia and Togo have left the IAG’s group of the ten worst performers. They have been replaced by Eritrea, Guinea Bissau and Nigeria.

From 2000 to 2011, seven countries demonstrated a significant improvement in their overall governance score: Liberia, Angola, Sierra Leone, Rwanda, Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo and Zambia. One country, Madagascar, has significantly declined.

Significant improvements at category level have been registered in *Safety & Rule of Law* by Liberia and Sierra Leone, in *Participation & Human Rights* by Angola, Guinea and Liberia, in *Sustainable Economic Opportunity* by Angola, Liberia, Mauritius and Sierra Leone, and in *Human Development* by Niger. Significant deteriorations have been registered in *Safety & Rule of Law* by Libya and Madagascar and in *Participation & Human Rights* by Madagascar.

Statistical autonomy

The Mo Ibrahim Foundation continues to advocate addressing the paucity of African data and the importance of statistical autonomy within African countries.

Mo Ibrahim said: “Good governance is about harnessing a country’s resources to achieve the results any citizen living in the 21st century has a right to expect. One of Africa’s biggest leadership and governance



challenges going forward is to master its own robust statistical system. Political sovereignty begins with data autonomy.”

-Ends-

For more information

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The full data set of the 2012 IAG will be published on the Foundation’s website on Monday 15 October, along with a media resource page including country specific news releases, photographs and background materials: www.moibrahimfoundation.org

The press conference will be streamed live on the Foundation’s website, where journalists will also be able to submit live questions. You can access the live stream here: <http://www.moibrahim.org/index>

- Twitter: [@Mo_IbrahimFdn](https://twitter.com/Mo_IbrahimFdn). Suggested hashtag to comment on the 2012 IAG: [#MIFIndex](https://twitter.com/hashtag/MIFIndex)
- Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/MoIbrahimFoundation>
- YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/user/moibrahimfoundation>
- Flickr: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/moibrahimfoundation>
- Google +: <https://plus.google.com/108279944197155618576/posts?hl=en>

Notes to editors

The Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG)

Established in 2007, the IIAG is the most comprehensive collection of quantitative data that provides an annual assessment of governance in every African country, with the exception of the Republic of Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan for which there are insufficient disaggregated data. Compiled in partnership with experts from a number of African institutions, the IIAG provides a framework for citizens, public authorities and partners to assess the effective delivery of public goods and services. The IIAG provides a tool for current and future leadership and for all stakeholders to robustly assess policy outcomes. Data used in the compilation of the 2012 IIAG are from 2000 – 2011. The data therefore do not capture any possible progress in post-Arab Spring countries.

The Mo Ibrahim Foundation (MIF)

The Mo Ibrahim Foundation (MIF) invests in governance and leadership to catalyse Africa’s transformation.

By providing tools and advocating for progressive leadership and responsible management, the Foundation works to bring about meaningful change in Africa.

Africa has made considerable progress in recent years. New challenges arise, however, as the continent grapples with the question of translating material wealth into improved quality of life for citizens. The contradictions of growth without sufficient employment or economic gains without matching rights for citizens produce imbalances that can only be resolved through more effective government - visionary leadership and responsible governance.

Overall improvements will occur when governments define an inclusive vision that builds on available human and natural resources, use data to assess results and determine the choices they make, and pursue implementation with vigour and determination.

- Leadership is centred on setting priorities or making choices and taking risks.

Progressive leadership:

- defines a clear and coherent vision that is inclusive, inspirational and innovative
- requires courageous and forward-looking decision-making
- delivers results

The Foundation focuses on highlighting examples of successful leadership and on providing opportunities and access for potential leaders to enhance leadership in Africa.

#MIFIndex



- Governance is centred on the implementation of policies and the management of risk.

Responsible management ensures:

- optimal allocation of limited resources
- inclusivity of all sectors of society
- balanced pursuit of successful development
- effective implementation and delivery of programmes

The Foundation focuses on promoting a data-driven and results orientated approach to policy-making and on bringing together diverse stakeholders to improve the quality of governance in Africa.